

REMARKSa. Claim Amendments

Claim 1 has been amended at line 1 to replace “from” with “of”, in order to render the language consistent with that of claim 14 and to stress the independent production of the two series of pulses.

b. Response to Claim Rejections

In the Final Office Action, dated 17 June 2002, claims 1-8, 12 and 13 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Lester (U.S. 4,998,046). Claims 14-16 were allowed, and claims 9-10 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

In maintaining the rejection over Lester in view of Applicant's arguments in the prior response, it was stated that “Lester's circuit means (Q4 and Q5) for producing the first series of pulses and a circuit means (Q6 and Q7) for producing a second series of pulses are entirely independent from each other. The reason is that either the first series-pulses-circuit (Q4 and Q5) are the second series-pulses-circuit (Q6 and Q7) is disable or inactivated, the other one is still independently working. For another example, the second series-pulses-circuit (Q6 and Q7) does not require any output or *series of pulses* from the first series-pulses-circuit (Q4 and Q5) in order to operate dependent on the first series of pulses.”

Applicant traverses the rejection and respectfully requests that the above argument be reconsidered. In Lester, Q4, Q6 and Q5, Q7 are power transistor switches. Lester expressly states that the power output stages are driven by the signals $\Phi 1$ and $\Phi 2$, and this is clearly shown in FIG. 2 (see $\Phi 1$, Q4, Q6 and $\Phi 2$, Q5, Q7). Lester further states that $\Phi 1$ and $\Phi 2$ are dependent on one another, i.e., they are out of phase by 180° (e.g., col. 7, lines 11-12). Q4, Q5 and Q6, Q7 therefore do not operate independently; instead, they are dependent on signals $\Phi 1/\Phi 2$, which in turn are dependent on each other.

Moreover, Lester's pulses are not combined additively to produce a high frequency pulse train for being applied to the electrodes to light the lamp, as is also required by Applicant's claims. The power transistor switches Q4, Q5 and Q6, Q7 alternately apply

voltage to the arc transformer T1 and filament transformer T2. The filament transformer steps the voltage down and applies it to heat the filaments (col. 8, lines 34-42). The output is not combined additively with the output of the arc transformer T1, which supplies the voltage to light the lamp (col. 8, lines 43-45). Moreover, the voltage from the filament transformer is applied across the filaments at both ends of the lamp (see FIG. 2), and therefore does not ^{not on lamp} add to the voltage across the lamp that drives the gas discharge.

In order to anticipate a claim, the reference must teach every element of the claim (MPEP 2131). For the reasons discussed above, Lester does not teach either (a) means for producing a second series pulses independently of the first series of pulses, or (b) means for combining additively the first and second series of pulses to produce a high frequency pulse train for being applied to the electrodes of the lamp so as to light the lamp, both of which are expressly required by Applicant's claims. Lester therefore fails to anticipate Applicant's claims, and Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of the claims under 35 USC §102 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

b. Substitute Pages

The Examiner required resubmission of the amended pages.

Accordingly, Applicant has submitted herewith substitute pages matched to the renumbered pages 6, 10, 11 and 28 and having the proper top margins.

c. Oath/Declaration

The oath/declaration was stated to be defective, on grounds that it does not include the signature of the second joint inventor, Mr. John Mullenger.

The declaration without the signature of Mr. John Mullenger was accepted under the Decision on Reviewed Petition under 37 CFR 1.47(a) dated 28 November 2000. A copy of the Decision was submitted with Applicant's prior response.

a. Conclusion

It is believed that the present amendment places all claims in condition for allowance. If there is any matter which could be expedited by consultation with the

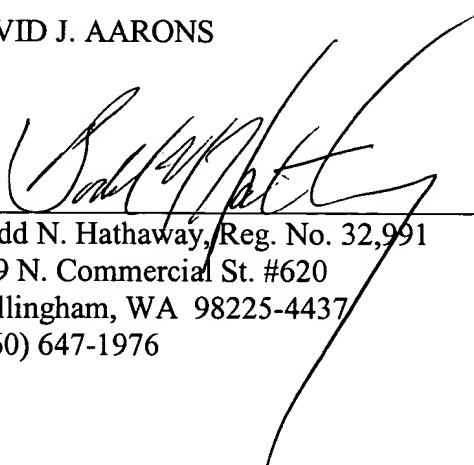
Applicant's attorney, such would be welcome. The Applicant's attorney can normally be reached at the phone number listed below.

Signed at Bellingham, County of Whatcom, State of Washington this 18th day of November 2002.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING (37 CFR 1.8a)

I hereby certify that this paper (along with any paper referred to as being attached or enclosed) is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231, on the date shown below.

11-18-02

Date

Dale Y Perry
(Print name of person mailing paper)

Dale Y Perry
(Signature of person mailing paper)